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Description/Subject: Dr. Gene Poor has been named the first Ernest & Dorothy Hamilton Professor of Entrepreneurship at Bowling Green State University. The endowed professorship in the College of Business Administration was created with a gift from internationally known Olympic skater and Bowling Green native Scott Hamilton in memory of his parents, both of whom taught at the University.

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Announcement of Dr. Gene W. Poor's appointment as the Scott Hamilton Endowed Professor of Entrepreneurship at Bowling Green State University.

Dr. Gene W. Poor, a faculty member at BGSU since 1972, was named the inaugural Scott Hamilton Professor of Entrepreneurship in recognition of his exceptional impact as both an educator and an entrepreneur. A professor of Visual Communication Technology, Poor helped shape the University's entrepreneurship minor by teaching Innovation Technology, Introductory Entrepreneurship, and other foundational courses that bridged creative thinking and business application.

In addition to his academic work, Poor is co-owner and "Chief Imagination Officer" of LifeFormations, a nationally recognized studio that designs and builds static and animated characters for trade shows, theme parks, museums, and retail environments.

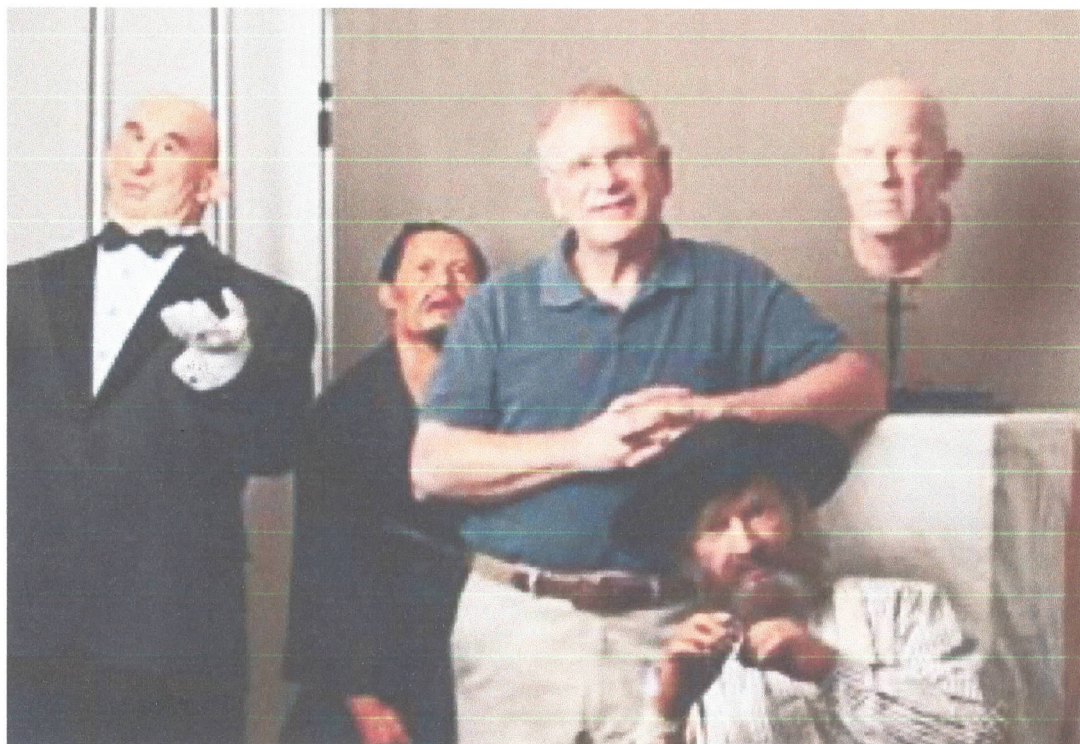
"Dr. Poor is both a master teacher and a recognized entrepreneur, and we're very pleased to have him as the first Hamilton Professor of Entrepreneurship," noted Dr. Nancy Merritt, interim dean of BGSU's College of Business Administration.

Digitized and preserved for educational and historical reference by Dr. Gene W. Poor, November 2025.

Announcement naming Dr. Gene W. Poor as the first Scott Hamilton Endowed Professor of Entrepreneurship at BGSU

Professorship endowed by Scott Hamilton filled

[BGSU](#) / [News](#) / [2005](#) / [September](#) / Professorship endowed by Scott Hamilton filled



BOWLING GREEN, O.—Dr. Gene Poor has been named the first Ernest & Dorothy Hamilton Professor of Entrepreneurship at Bowling Green State University. The endowed professorship in the College of Business Administration was created with a gift from internationally known Olympic skater and Bowling Green native Scott Hamilton in memory of his parents, both of whom taught at the University.

Hamilton, who now lives in California, and his neighbor Bill Dallas, a businessman and Bowling Green graduate, announced last year

that they were giving the University \$3 million to establish an entrepreneurship center. A portion of the contribution was designated to create the endowed professorship that bears the names of Hamilton's parents.

Poor, who has taught at Bowling Green since 1972, is a professor of visual communication technology.

He has been involved with the entrepreneurship minor degree program, having taught the Innovation Technology and Introductory Entrepreneurship courses.

He also is a part owner and "the chief imagination officer" for LifeFormations. The successful Bowling Green company designs and builds static and animated characters for trade shows, theme parks, museums and retail establishments.

"Dr. Poor is both a master teacher and a recognized entrepreneur, and we're very pleased to have him as the first Hamilton Professor of Entrepreneurship," said Dr. Nancy Merritt, interim dean of Bowling Green's College of Business Administration.

"Gene will be teaching three entrepreneurship courses—plus visual communication technology—this year, helping students to connect with entrepreneurs, and working on research and faculty development," she said, noting that like the entrepreneurship program itself, his class assignments will cross the boundaries of departments and colleges within the University.

Poor came to the University in 1970 as a doctoral fellow and later founded the visual communications technology department. He is widely known for his pioneering work in the field of animatronics but equally, on campus, for his dedication to his students.

He was chosen by the Student Alumni Association to receive the 2004 Master Teacher Award, which is considered the highest honor given to faculty.

In 1999, he received the Outstanding Adviser Certificate of Merit from the National Academic Advising Association. Earlier at BGSU, he won the 1997-98 College of Technology Adviser of the Year Award and was named co-recipient of the 1998 University Outstanding Adviser Award. The Undergraduate Student Government presented him with the Excellence in Teaching Award in 1985.

"He's truly outstanding outside the classroom, too," Merritt said, pointing out that Poor was a 2004 winner of the northwest Ohio "Entrepreneur of the Year Award" given by the accounting firm of Ernst & Young.

Since its inception, LifeFormations has worked with more than 400 businesses and 100 museums and science centers throughout the world. One recent project was creating 50 historically accurate characters depicting the life of Abraham Lincoln for the Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Ill. The more than 2,000 animated and static characters built by the company have been seen by an estimated 10 million people.

About a third of the employees at his company are BGSU graduates who have completed technology internships there.

Before creating LifeFormations, Poor had been involved in the development of several other start-up ventures, ranging from real estate development and construction companies to employee

training services. He also previously was a part-owner of a local restaurant that he designed.

In addition to making conference presentations and publishing numerous articles in professional journals, he has written seven books, two of them co-authored with colleague Dr. Rodney Heiligmann, an assistant professor of visual communication technology at BGSU. The professors' newest book, released in June by Hyperformance Publishing, is "The Entrepreneur's Journey —From Dreaming to Doing."

One of the fastest growing academic programs on campus—growing from 15 students in the fall of 2003 to 120 students this fall—the entrepreneurship minor distinguishes itself from other programs by providing students in any major with a fundamental education in business and entrepreneurship. The program is not exclusive to business students.

Editor's Note: For more information about the BGSU entrepreneurship program, visit <http://www.cba.bgsu.edu/cba/Entrepreneurship.html>.

(Posted September 26, 2005)

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